

In the Office Action of March 14, 2002, claims 1-5, 7, 11, 14, 17-33 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over subject application in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,344,883 to Yamada et al. (hereinafter "Yamada"); and claims 6, 8-10, 34 and 36-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over subject application in view of Yamada and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,061,117 to Horie et al. (hereinafter "Horie"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 7, 11, 14, 17-33 and 35 by asserting that Yamada discloses in Figures 10A-10D (column 19, line 40 through column 27, line 35) a dielectric frame, 36, (OMR83, column 26, lines 35-62) in a region other than a region where said pixel (pixel region in Figure 10C) electrode is formed, said dielectric frame distorting electric field applied to said liquid crystal layer (inherent to a dielectric material, OMR83), and an alignment layer, 38a and 38b, on at least one substrate between said first and second substrates.

However, Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion. The disclosed photoresist layer 36 in Yamada is not a dielectric frame, and the pixel region 31 disclosed in Yamada is not equivalent to a pixel electrode.

At column 25, lines 28-32, Yamada states: Convex portions 66 with a height of about 3  $\mu\text{m}$  were formed with at photoresist (OMR83; produced by Tokyo Ohka-sha) on regions other than pixel regions of a substrate 62 having transparent electrodes 63 made of ITO (thickness: about 100 nm) on its surface.

Claim 1 is allowable over the cited reference in that claim 1 recited a combination of elements, including, for example "a pixel electrode in said pixel region; a dielectric frame in a region other than a region where said pixel electrode is formed, said dielectric frame distorting

electric field applied to said liquid crystal layer.” Yamada does not, singly or in combination with the background section of the subject application, at least teach or suggest at least these features of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, and similarly independent claim 30 are allowable for the reasons discussed above, and similarly, claims 4-5, 7, 11, 14, 17-29, 31-33 and 35, which depend from independent claim 1 and independent claim 30, respectively, are allowable over the prior art for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as the additional features they recite.

Claims 6, 8-10, 34 and 36-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the subject application in view of Yamada, and further in view of Horie.

However, as discussed above, Yamada, either alone or in combination with the background section of the subject application, fails to disclose all of the claimed features of the invention, including, “a pixel electrode in said pixel region; a dielectric frame in a region other than a region where said pixel electrode is formed, said dielectric frame distorting electric field applied to said liquid crystal layer.” None of the cited references, including Horie, Yamada and the background of the subject application, singly or in combination, at least teaches or suggests these features of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 6, 8-10, 34 and 36-38, which depend from independent claims 1 and 30 respectively, are allowable over the cited references.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 30, and claims 2-11, 14, 17-29 and 31-38 which depend from independent claims 1 and 30, respectively, are allowable over the cited references.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5, 7, 11, 14, 17-33 and 35 under §103(a) in view of the subject application in combination with Yamada and claims 6, 8-10, 34 and 36-38 under §103(a) being unpatentable over Yamada in view of the subject application, and further in view of Horie.


If the Examiner deems that a telephone call would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 496-7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

MCKENNA LONG & ALDRIDGE LLP  
1900 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 496-7500

By   
William D. Titcomb  
Registration No.: 46,463